

Remarks in a Tribute to National Review Magazine and William F. Buckley, Jr.

October 6, 2005

Thanks. I'm here to escort William F. Buckley, Jr., to lunch. *[Laughter]* But first I've got some things I want to say. It's a honor to celebrate the 50th anniversary of National Review and soon to be the 80th birthday of our honoree. You probably think this is a—the Yale Scholars Association meeting. *[Laughter]* Actually, Bill Buckley did have an influence on me when I followed him at Yale. You might remember one of his famous quotes was that, "The job of conservatives was to stand athwart history, yelling, 'Stop.' " That's the approach I took to most of my classes. *[Laughter]*

I also do want to throw a little bouquet to him and let him know that all I've learned about the English language—*[laughter]*—at any rate, it's good to welcome the Buckley family. Thank you all for coming. It's such an honor to have you all here. You've got a great family, and you're a family of public service and a family that has stood strong for what you believe, without wavering. I appreciate Dr. Kissinger and Dusty Rhodes and Ed Capano as well. It's good to see you all.

The interesting thing about Bill Buckley's career is he's a—obviously, not idle. He likes to do a lot of different things. He was an author, an editor, a spy, a novelist, a sailor, and a conductor. The most important thing he did was to contribute to the realm of ideas for America. He was an entrepreneur. He kind of gathered up some dreamers and decided to do something. A lot of times dreamers don't do anything; they just sit there and dream. He decided to do something, and he formed a magazine that helped move conservatism from the margins of American society into the Oval Office. That's a significant contribution.

The amazing thing is, is that sometimes it's hard to be a leader because you hear all kinds of voices. He's certainly heard different voices when he formed the National Review. He had an eclectic group of people. That's a Yale word. *[Laughter]* He had voices that included ex-communists who knew better than most the threat posed to America by

the Soviet Union. He had voices such as free marketers who knew that markets could deliver better results than bureaucracies. He had voices from the traditionalists who understood that a Government by—of and by and for the people could not stand unless it stood on moral ground. They all different—represented a different strand of conservative thought. Yet, when they came together under the conductor's baton, they made beautiful music. Congratulations for being a leader.

I'm sure it's hard for some of the youngsters—unfortunately, that doesn't include me anymore—*[laughter]*—to imagine the day when the only conservative game in Washington, DC, was Bill Buckley and the National Review. And today, we've got, of course, an abundance of conservative columnists and radio hosts and television shows and think tanks and all kinds of organizations. I guess in an intellectual sense, you could say these are all Bill's children. And like children, they grow up and go their own way. But I'm confident that the faithful advocates of the free enterprise system, like those at the National Review, regard the competition they have created as a good thing. I certainly hope so.

It's hard to believe that in 1955, the Soviet Union was in full power, that Ronald Reagan was a Democrat, and the truth of the matter is, Bill, I was more interested in Willie Mays than I was in you. *[Laughter]* But a lot has changed in a brief period of time, when you think about it. Many of the more important changes of the 20th century happened because the National Review stood strong, and that's a fact—that's a fact of history.

I'm glad to know that the people of National Review aren't resting on their laurels. A sign of a good leader is somebody who can lay the foundation so that people are able to carry on. I think that's going to be a legacy of Bill Buckley. He just didn't show up and create something that cratered; he created something that stood the test of time and grew.

The people of the National Review are determined to leave their mark on this new century, and we appreciate it. You got a lot of

readers here in the West Wing. My admonition is to keep thinking, to keep writing, and keep working.

I found another Buckley quote interesting—when he wrote, with characteristic modesty, that did National Review not exist, no one would have invented it. [*Laughter*] I think it's more accurate to say that only Bill Buckley could have invented National Review. And that's a tremendous influence on American life that can be explained only by its unwavering trust and appeal of human freedom—this great understanding of the power of freedom to change societies and to lift up people's lives.

It is an honor to be here to thank you for your service. I want to thank you for leaving us a magazine and a group of thinkers that will help make the advance of liberty over the last 50 years look like a dress rehearsal for the next 50 years.

May God bless the Buckley family. Thank you for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:40 a.m. in Room 450 of the Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to former Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger; Thomas L. "Dusty" Rhodes, National Review President and Board Chairman; and Edward A. Capano, National Review Publisher and CEO.

Proclamation 7940—German-American Day, 2005

October 6, 2005

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

German Americans have played an important role in establishing America as a land where liberty is protected for all of its citizens. Each year on German-American Day, we celebrate the contributions the millions of Americans of German descent have made to our great Nation.

Among the early German immigrants, many saw America as a beacon of religious freedom and an opportunity for an improved standard of living. German immigrants helped pioneer the first American colony at Jamestown. Frederick Augustus Muhlenberg

served as the first Speaker of the House of Representatives; in this role, he certified the final version of the Bill of Rights.

Throughout our country's history, men and women of German descent have worn the uniform of the United States military to defend our country's freedom. Among these were Admiral Chester Nimitz, Commander in Chief of the United States Pacific Fleet during World War II, and General Dwight D. Eisenhower, who went on to become one of America's Presidents of German ancestry. Today, German-American troops continue to serve proudly in our Nation's Armed Forces.

German Americans have enriched many other aspects of American life. Albert Einstein's advancements in the field of physics help define our understanding of the universe. Theodor Seuss Geisel, more commonly known as Dr. Seuss, has captivated the imaginations of children for generations with his timeless classics. Baseball great Lou Gehrig's courage on and off the field continues to inspire the American spirit more than 60 years after his death.

On German-American Day, we also honor the important friendship between the United States and Germany. Our nations share beliefs in human rights and dignity, and on this day, I join all Americans in celebrating the bonds that tie our two nations and in reaffirming the importance of our continuing friendship.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 6, 2005, as German-American Day. I encourage all Americans to celebrate the many contributions German Americans have made to our Nation's liberty and prosperity.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:28 a.m., October 7, 2005]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on October 11.